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MATHEWS, COLLINS, SHEPHERD & GOULD, P.A.
SUITE 306
100 THANET CIRCLE
PRINCETON, NJ 08540

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DEC 02 2003

OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Application of :
Hirao, et al. :
Application No. 09/919,024 : ON PETITION
Filed: July 31, 2001 :
Attorney Docket No. 4296-1447 :

This is a decision on the petition under 37 CFR 1.137(a), filed November 13, 2003, to revive the above-identified application.

The petition is dismissed.

Any request for reconsideration of this decision must be submitted within TWO (2) MONTHS from the mail date of this decision. Extensions of time under 37 CFR 1.136(a) are permitted. The reconsideration request should include a cover letter entitled "Renewed Petition under 37 CFR 1.137(a)."

The application became abandoned for failure to timely file a reply within the meaning of 37 CFR 1.113 to the final Office action of April 9, 2003. The proposed reply required for consideration of a petition to revive must be a Notice of Appeal (and appeal fee required by 37 CFR 1.17(b)), an amendment that *prima facie* places the application in condition for allowance, or the filing of a continuing application. See MPEP 711.03(c)(III)(A)(2). Petitioner has filed a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) with the instant petition to revive.

A grantable petition to revive an abandoned application under 37 CFR 1.137(a) must be accompanied by:

(1) The required reply, unless previously filed. In a nonprovisional application abandoned for failure to prosecute, the required reply may be met by the filing of a continuing application. In an application or patent,

abandoned or lapsed for failure to pay the issue fee or any portion thereof, the required reply must be the payment of the issue fee or any outstanding balance thereof;

(2) The petition fee as set forth in § 1.17(1);

(3) A showing to the satisfaction of the Commissioner that the entire delay in filing the required reply from the due date for the reply until the filing of a grantable petition pursuant to this paragraph was unavoidable; and

(4) Any terminal disclaimer (and fee as set forth in § 1.20 (d)) required pursuant to paragraph (c) of this section.

This petition lacks item (3) above.

Decisions on reviving abandoned applications on the basis of "unavoidable" delay have adopted the reasonably prudent person standard in determining if the delay was unavoidable:

The word 'unavoidable' . . . is applicable to ordinary human affairs, and requires no more or greater care or diligence than is generally used and observed by prudent and careful men in relation to their most important business. It permits them in the exercise of this care to rely upon the ordinary and trustworthy agencies of mail and telegraph, worthy and reliable employees, and such other means and instrumentalities as are usually employed in such important business. If unexpectedly, or through the unforeseen fault or imperfection of these agencies and instrumentalities, there occurs a failure, it may properly be said to be unavoidable, all other conditions of promptness in its rectification being present.

In re Mattullath, 38 App. D.C. 497, 514-15 (1912) (quoting Ex parte Pratt, 1887 Dec. Comm'r Pat. 31, 32-33 (1887)); see also Winkler v. Ladd, 221 F. Supp. 550, 552, 138 USPQ 666, 167-68 (D.D.C. 1963), aff'd, 143 USPQ 172 (D.C. Cir. 1963); Ex parte Henrich, 1913 Dec. Comm'r Pat. 139, 141 (1913). In addition, decisions on revival are made on a "case-by-case basis, taking all the facts and circumstances into account." Smith v. Mossinghoff, 671 F.2d 533, 538, 213 USPQ 977, 982 (D.C. Cir. 1982). Finally, a petition cannot be granted where a petitioner has failed to meet his or her burden of establishing that the delay was "unavoidable." Haines v. Quigg, 673 F. Supp. 314, 316-17, 5 USPQ2d 1130, 1131-32 (N.D. Ind. 1987).

Petitioner asserts that the delay was caused by failure to receive the advisory action until after the statutory period to reply had ended. Petitioner submitted a response to the final Office action in the form of a "Request For Reconsideration" on July 7, 2003. In response, the Office mailed an advisory action on October 22, 2003.

Petitioner may not rely upon non-receipt of an advisory action to establish that the delay was unavoidable. 37 CFR 1.116 and 1.135(b) are manifest that proceedings concerning an amendment after final rejection will not operate to avoid abandonment of the application in the absence of a timely and proper appeal. A delay is not "unavoidable" when an applicant simply permits the maximum extendable statutory period for reply to a final Office action to expire while awaiting a notice of allowance or other action. See MPEP 711.03(c)(III)(C)(2).

Accordingly, the showing of record is not sufficient to establish to the satisfaction of the Commissioner that the delay was unavoidable within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. § 133 and 37 CFR 1.137(a).

Please note, pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136, an extension of time must be filed prior to the expiration of the maximum period obtainable for reply to avoid abandonment. Accordingly, since the \$950.00 extension of time submitted with the petition on November 13, 2003 was subsequent to the maximum period obtainable for reply, this fee is unnecessary and will be credited to petitioner's deposit account no. 13-2165.

Further correspondence with respect to this matter should be addressed as follows:

By mail: Mail Stop Petition
 Commissioner for Patents
 Box 1450
 Alexandria, VA 22313

By FAX: (703) 746-3258
 Attn: Office of Petitions

By hand: Customer Service Window
 2011 South Clark Place
 Crystal Plaza Two (left side entrance of building)
 Arlington, VA

Telephone inquiries should be directed to the undersigned at
(703) 306-9200.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'E. J. Tannouse', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Edward J. Tannouse
Petitions Attorney
Office of Petitions
United States Patent and Trademark Office